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ABSTRACT

Just a few years ago, there was widespread belief that our society was working in the direction of universal higher education. This believ is much less certain now. Great dissatisfactcn with mass education has arisen within the world of education itself, and perhaps more serious, the growing politicization of higher education has created problems concerning continued public support for an ever larger and presumably more influential higher education community. An adversary culture is now firmly entrenched in higher education. Unlike the assertions of many, this does not represent a change from, but a continuity with earlier forms of campus politics. The intellectuals' propensity to condemn in the sixties what they helped formulate in the fifties has only helped to further the breach between the public and the university. The President, in his message to Congress, proposed a program in which Federal subsidies would be used in such a way that resources available to the poor students are brought up to the level of middle income students. There has been little or no reaction to this or to the proposal for the creation of a National Foundation for Higher Education frcm Congress or the Campus. Statesmanship will be needed to preserve both the independence of the institutions and their viability as stable and creative instruments in society. (AF)

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ON UNIVERSAL HIGHER EDUCATION

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I shall forego the ritual of asserting what a pleasure and honor it is to address the American Council on Education, the one organization that most fully and faithfully represents the views and interests of higher education in the United States. Honor it remains, but to describe it as a pleasure would be to invite disbelief at the very outset. Anyone who attempts a serious statement about higher education at this moment courts serious trouble. A year ago, writing in the American Scholar I invoked Joyce's formula: "silence, exile, cunning." (1) Nothing in the interval has changed my mind. My appearance today responds not to any sense of opportunity, but merely to dull Duty, Virtue's residue, Reason's remnant.

Duty is a conception that is all the more elusive for being familiar. It denotes something more than obligation, but nonetheless begins there.

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One service performed in return for another. In this instance I have not the least difficulty in perceiving and in acknowledging just where my indebtedness lies. For two decades now I have had access on the most generous bases to the worlds of government, of social science, and of university administration. Something is owed in return for that experience. At very least it involves the obligation to offer in a time of trouble such advice as may be asked for. This will be the purpose of my remarks: to speak from the point of view of government about a subject of considerable concern to education, namely, the subject of "Higher Education for Everybody?"

That government must be a party to any such decision will not, I would hope, be disputed. Elite education can be paid for by elites. Universal education must be paid for by taxes. That is all there is to that, save to note that given this ineluctability political science ought to explore this relationship, and may even be of some use in facilitating it.

This ought to be especially so at the present moment. Few things are more depressing to a social scientist than crisis mongering -- especially of the sort we have witnessed over the past decade or so when social scientists themselves are the principal culprits. But there

are such things as genuine crises, and one has come along in higher education. The present situation was fairly described in the opening statement of the report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest: "The crisis on American campuses has no parallel in the history of the nation."

Let me state forthwith that a crisis for the campus is by no means necessarily a crisis for the society at large. It is easy to confuse or to equate the two. But crisis there is, and this has considerable consequences for the question of whether and how we are to move from our present situation of mass higher education, to a universal practice.

Just six years ago Earl J. McGrath assembled a group of us to consider this subject, and I believe it fair to state that we began our consideration with the assumption that our society was working its way in the direction of universal higher education. This certainly was my assumption, and I began my contribution to the volume that subsequently appeared with the assertion that the time had come to get on with the detailed business of specifying exactly what we would need to do, because clearly we were going to do it.

> A point is reached in the development of any major social standard when the ability to conceive must be succeeded by the capacity to measure. That point is clearly at hand with regard to the question of universal opportunity for higher education.

American society has been working toward this standard for some generations now; in a sense, from the outset. The average level of education has steadily advanced; we have in the past two decades reached the point where a very large number of persons go on from secondary to higher education. With the resulting advantage both to the nation and to the individuals firmly established in terms of productivity, life income expectations, and the like, the comparative disadvantage of those who do not go on has become equally evident, whereupon the dynamics of a democratic and to some degree egalitarian society take hold and product the demand that these opportunities be available to all. (2)

Earlier that year I had drafted the portions of the Democratic Party platform concerned with education. It was, I believe, accurate to state, as I did, that the 1964 platform marked, in the 124 year sequence,

> ...the transition from merely encouraging higher education to, in effect, insisting on it. The preceding platform had declared the belief "that America can meet its educational obligations" but had not really defined what those obligations might be. Rather, the 1960 document called for a series of specific categories of Federal assistance, leaving it for the future to determine just how much money and how many people would be involved. The 1964 platform, in contrast, said little about forms of assistance, but was explicit as to the objectives to be attained thereby.
>
> > Our task is to make the national purpose serve the human purpose: <u>that every person shall have the opportunity to become all that he or she is capable of becoming.</u>

> We believe that knowledge is essential to individual freedom and to the conduct of a free society. We believe that education is the surest and most profitable investment a nation can make.
>
> Regardless of family financial status, therefore, education should be open to every boy or girl in America up to the highest level which he or she is able to master. (3)

It would hardly be fair to declare that all this is behind us, but surely what seemed an untroubled trajectory, a rather straightforward logarithmic projection, seems somehow less certain now. The course of events -- the data -- continue thus far pretty much as projected. But it is the projections that now come into question. Is it really likely that we will continue as we have?

It is necessary to ask what happened to call this seeming certainty into question.

This is a subject that has been widely and, on occasion, intelligently discussed. I would hope not so much to add to the discussion as to stress two points, familiar enough in themselves, but which would appear to be of special consequence to the subject of universal higher education. The first point is that great dissatisfaction with mass education has arisen within the world of education itself, thereby necessarily casting a cloud on the prospect of proceeding from where we are to a situation which by simple

extrapolation would presumably be even worse. The second point is that the growing politicization of higher education creates problems concerning continued public support for an ever larger and presumably more influential higher education community.

It is not necessary for the present purpose to consider in great detail the sources of discontent. It is enough that discontent exists, and that it has assumed forms that are immediately threatening to the life of the university as such.

Witnesses abound. In his annual report to the Harvard Board of Overseers, Nathan Pusey described 1968-69 as "a dismal year" which in time will appear "to have been very costly." Gardner Ackley described 1969-70 as "a tragic year in the life of the University of Michigan -- a year that has begun the destruction of this university as a great center of learning -- destroyed not so much by outside forces as by the actions of its own faculty and administration."

Prognoses for 1970-71 are as bad, although not, of course, necessarily true. What this comes to is that the system isn't working very well, and that a large number of persons in the system appear to want it profoundly changed. It is hardly then to be assumed that

there will be untroubled expansion of the present system from the point where about half the relevant age groups obtains some post secondary education, to the point where all, or almost all do so. The most generally agreed point is that the proportion of young persons who really would want and would benefit from higher education carried forth at traditional levels of intellect and discipline is limited. There is a genetic limitation, perhaps also a cultural one. Judgments will differ on just how large, or small, that proportion might be, but just about everyone agrees it is something considerably less than the proportion of students in higher education at this moment. Nathan Glazer writes:

> Higher education is not suited to training or apprenticeship, except for training and apprenticeship in learning itself. As a result, the colleges and universities filled with people who had no particular interest in what the institution had to offer, but had to undergo some unpleasant rite to take up decent and satisfying work. (4)

If this is the case, as it would appear to be, it is hardly then to be assumed that there will be an untroubled expansion of the present system to the point where everyone receives some kind of post secondary education.

These limits are not imposed merely by a generalized public

perception that all is not well on campus. To some degree at least the self-destructiveness of the higher education community has proceeded to the point where its capacity for expansion is limited. A good man has always been hard to find, and to find one for a serious position in academic administration or leadership is becoming very hard indeed. Stephen K. Bailey has been, I believe, most forthright on this not especially pleasant matter.

> As I watch the melancholy list grow of friends who have resigned (voluntarily or under duress) from college presidencies and school superintendencies during the past few years (or, more tragically, have dropped dead of heart attacks or have committed suicide), I begin to wonder how many contemporary educational leaders will survive the current educational revolution.
>
> Revolutions are insatiable maws -- with cavernous appetite for men's lives and fortunes. The most civilized are a peculiar delicacy of the revolutionary appetite, for, unconsumed, they stand in the way of the necessary over-simplifications of the revolutionary mind. And they are readily betrayed into revolutionary hands by the old guard, who always find perceptive consciences a threat and an embarrassment to the status quo. (5.)

Bailey's concern goes to the second of the two points I have indicated seem most relevant to the question of universal higher education, namely the growing politicization of the academic world. He speaks of the revolutionary appetite, the revolutionary mind. He is speaking about the rise on campus of activities directed towards

shaping not just the character of the university community itself, but of the society at large.

This is a relatively recent event, the result of what Glazer has termed "the Berkeley invention," that is to say the joining of general political issues with specific university issues.

It would seem to me that this relates in at least two ways to the issue of universal higher education. It has resulted in considerable measure from the rapid and recent expansion of higher education, such that sheer size gave political consequence to the views of dominant university opinions, and secondly from the fact that these opinions are increasingly opposed to those of the larger society.

What is at issue is an adversary culture firmly entrenched in higher education. The nature of this culture, the extent of its strength, and its grip on the universities, as well as other institutions of acculturation, have come as a surprise to many. The patrician tradition and leadership of the most prestigious universities seems to me to have been painfully vulnerable in its initial encounters with this new reality. It would seem to me that the individuals involved by and large could not understand or could not believe what suddenly was before their eyes and in varying degrees panicked, collaborated,

or simply collapsed. In this they displayed what I fear has been a problem in higher education, namely that its leaders have not been especially well educated. For all the spectacular minds that from time to time have been put in charge of our great institutions, on balance the leadership has been social and administrative -- the right family or the right work habits -- rather than intellectual.

We have paid and are paying a price for this. For example it has become increasingly clear that in the early post-war period the radical impulse in politics moved over into the culture where it prospered as almost never before. Students fell silent about politics, and university administrators concluded that some strange malady or profound discontinuity had occurred. When in the course of the 1960's the radical impulse returned to politics, this time greatly strengthened and legitimized by the culture, administrators again concluded they were being confronted with something utterly new, altogether without precedent. We began to hear about the "youth culture." I for one would disagree. It would seem to me that the present state of campus politics and manners represents a clear continuity with earlier forms, allowing only for changes of scale. For years now Lionel Trilling has been describing, defining, and

projecting what he first termed "the adversary culture." Surely there are persons in authority in academia capable of understanding that Trilling is a most serious man, that unlike some others perhaps, he really is trying to tell us something. Surely there are those capable of perceiving the polemical advantage of depicting a minority movement as a generational transformation. There is no justification for having been taken so utterly unawares.

I do not deny that some things have changed. For some time -- by which I mean for years, not months -- it has been evident that an almost classic form of nihilism has been taking root in upper class culture in the United States. I so argued in a paper given in 1968, citing the analysis by Michael Polanyi of the bases of nihilist belief, and his superbly important aside that the nihilist argument, given its premises, had not been answered. The paper was duly published, and I subsequently learned from Polanyi that this was the first time anyone had referred to his earlier analysis. So far as I am aware, it was also the last time, for not a murmur arose in response to my effort. How many university youngsters will have to blow up how many buildings before anyone begins to take Polanyi seriously is a question I will accordingly not seek to answer. But in

a serious sense it can be said this knowledge was available to us had we cared to use it. It is simply that that work was not really taken seriously.

Nor has anyone grounds for being surprised at the increasing political ambitions and activities of the campus community. Writing in Foreign Affairs over three years ago Irving Kristol explained why this would happen, and what it would most likely mean. It would happen because the higher education community had become large and important enough to serve as a viable base for intellectuals seeking "that species of power we call moral authority." A new class would seem to have emerged.

> The politics of this new class is novel in that its locus of struggle is the college campus. One is shocked at this -- we are used to thinking that politics ought not to intrude on the campus. But we shall no doubt get accustomed to the idea. Meanwhile, there is going to be a great deal of unpleasant turbulence. The academic community in the United States today has evolved into a new political constituency. College students, like their teachers, are "new men" who find the traditional student role too restrictive. Students and faculty therefore find it easy to combine their numbers and their energies for the purpose of social and political action. The first objective -- already accomplished in large measure -- is to weaken control of the administration and to dispossess it of its authoritative powers over campus activities. From this point the movement into politics proper -- including elections -- is about as predictable as anything can be.(6.)

Kristol was less confident concerning the consequences of this emergence save that they were not likely to be especially helpful.

> Just what direction this movement into politics will follow it is too early to say with certainty. Presumably, it will be toward "the left," since this is the historical orientation of the intellectual class as a whole. It is even possible that the movement will not be calmed until the United States has witnessed the transformation of its two-party system to make room for a mass party of the ideological left, as in most European countries -- except that its "grass roots" will be on the campus rather than in the factory. But what is certain is that the national prestige and the international position of the United States are being adversely affected by this <u>secession des clercs</u>. Imperial powers need social equilibrium at home if they are to act effectively in the world. It was possible to think, in the years immediately after World War II, that the United States had indeed achieved this kind of equilibrium -- that consensus and equipoise at home would permit our statesmen to formulate and pursue a coherent foreign policy. But the "academic revolution" of the 1950s and 1960s raises this issue again, in a most problematic and urgent way.(7)

Our concern here is not with the consequences for foreign policy, but rather with the effect of this academic revolution on the disposition of the public to support a continued movement toward universal higher education. It is impossible to know, and hazardous to speculate as to the answer to this question, but surely the presumption would have to be that public support will diminish, especially to the degree that the "academic" position is seen as hostile to the course of the larger polity in ways that are both hard to follow and hard to explain.

This is perhaps especially true of the present situation in which so much of what university intellectuals detest about American foreign policy is so indisputably the product of American intellectuals. A consultant to the Special Committee on Campus Tensions which was established last year by the American Council on Education put this point with a certain acerbity.

> It wasn't the Mississippi tenant farmer who ordered the troops to Vietnam. More likely, and more specifically, it was the Harvard Junior Fellows -- those who had maximum chance to develop intellectually.

Robert Nisbet has ascribed this to a "special kind of hubris that attacked the social sciences in this country in the 1950's." I have shared this view and agree. What one could wish for is a period of mild repentance. Instead the experience seems to have produced in many circles a kind of frustrated outrage of the kind Lenin might have described as an "infantile disorder," but which increasingly we are told is a virtuous rage to off the pigs and generally to punish working class groups which are doubtless guilty of much wrongdoing, but which surely cannot be accused of having taken game theory too far in the evolution of the doctrine of counter-insurgency. This raises a further, and to my thinking, fundamental point about the increasing politicization of the university community. It is not likely to raise

the quality, in the sense of the generally perceived effectiveness, of our politics. Kristol writes that "No modern nation has ever constructed a foreign policy that was acceptable to its intellectuals." I wonder if there is not a corollary that no group of modern intellectuals, when they have managed to get hold of a nation's foreign policy, has produced one satisfactory to the people at large. I don't know why this should be so -- if indeed it is so -- but I suspect it has something to do with an exaggerated notion of the power of intellectual analysis to master the political process. For reasons that I do not wholly comprehend, this has been accompanied by an increasing tendency among intellectuals in the modern era to be intolerant of deviations from prevailing doctrine, even contemptuous of dissent. Thirty years ago Orwell wrote: "The common man is still living in the mental world of Dickens, but nearly every modern intellectual has gone over to some or other form of totalitarianism." Just this month Norman Podhoretz repeats this observation, deploring "the barbaric hostility to freedom of thought which by the late 1960's had become one of the hallmarks of /the radical/ ethos." (8) It was the practice of the university radicals of that period to compare the America of the Johnson administration to Hitler's

Germany. It would seem to me that only a serious abandonment of standards of evidence could make any such comparison even remotely credible. This was absurd. What one fears is not absurd is the growing conviction among critics of the left that the present era can be compared to the Weimar era in Germany, when the same devaluation and detestation of everything the polity was able to achieve was also the mark of the high intellectuals. One is struck, for example, by the echoes in our own times of Walter Z. Laqueur's account of Kurt Tucholsky and his circle.

> These were not insensitive men but they had no real roots themselves and, therefore, they lacked the sensorium for the patriotic feeling of their fellow-citizens. They were incapable of understanding anyone who reacted differently from the way they did. (9)

For surely the manner persists. Aaron Wildavsky writes: "In the relation of the white elite to public issues there is a desire to condemn. There is a will to believe the worst. There is a compulsion to make events speak to the necessity of revolutionary change." Is this not almost a formula for lowering the level of esteem in which the elite institutions of advanced thought are held by the great mass of citizenry whose ideological life tends toward the unadventurous?

It is exactly that, and it is necessary to stay a moment with this point. Higher education in America, for all its size, remains a privilege. It is to some extent a generational privilege, separating old from young. But it is also a privilege among the young. Half get it. Half do not. Of those who do, far the most attractive arrangements are made for the children of the well-to-do, or for another and not less lucky group of persons who happen to be very smart. Of those who do not, the disadvantage is all the greater because they are so conspicuously chosen to be excluded.

This elite quality is not likely to change. The social composition of "high quality" American university is to the American social structure as a masked ball is to a mass movement. To be sure one of the very best covers for class privilege is a passionate public concern with the under privileged. But the sheer minority status of students and persons with higher education, and the fact of their vastly better prospects when compared with the rest of society, make it difficult to suppose their political demands will ever in our time acquire the legitimacy which democracies associate with majority opinion. Those seeking to induce the public to pay for universal higher education might usefully remember

that only 11% of the adult population of the United States graduated from a four-year college. And despite the recent growth in college attendance, in 1985 that figure will have risen only to 14 or 15%. Put differently, 89% of American voters may or may not share the values and political inclinations associated with a college degree, but at all events they do not have the degree.

What this comes to is that the more politicized the universities become, the less public support they can expect. At least I believe this to be so. David Riesman, Nathan Glazer and others have usefully questioned the notion that the economy, or the government, or the society at large genuinely "needs" to have a large number of young persons receiving higher education. We tend to cloak our idealist actions in pragmatic guise. The society pays for education because it is thought to be to the advantage of those who get it. If it should ever be widely perceived that the society itself is threatened in the process, we would have to expect that genuinely pragmatic considerations will come into play.

The Scranton Commission said as much.

> As a practical matter, it would be naive for universities that frequently or intensely involve themselves institutionally in controversial political issues to expect to retain the full financial and attitudinal support of a society to which they seem to be laying political seige.

A general change in public attitude, should it come, is likely to make an extraordinarily unpleasant impression on higher education communities which continue to enjoy among themselves a slightly beleaguered aura when in fact they are exceptionally free of outside pressures. In a study made for the American Council on Education only two years ago -- and being presented to you this afternoon -- Heinz Eulau found that "legislative oversight of higher education is chara cterized by a norm of passivity." Constituents made few demands, and it was, in any event, assumed that the educators knew best. This assumption is eroding. Just last month at Berkeley Paul Seabury spoke of the university's "ominous and progressive estrangement from the people of California."

There is a poignant quality to this growing estrangement, namely that the encounter is so unequal. The silent majority, if you will accept that term , is silent not least because it finds it so difficult to say things in terms that will win a respectful hearing among those who judge such matters. Like Orwell's working class, it lives in a world not far removed from Victorian virtues. I for one find those virtues -- confidence in the nation, love of the nation, a willingness to sacrifice for it -- priceless. But the symbols of those beliefs are tattered, even at times tawdry. It is not fair. But it is true. Daniel Bell has recently stated the facts with an understanding but painful candor.

> ...While minority life-styles and cultures have often conflicted with those of the majority, what is striking today is that the majority has no intellectually respectable culture of its own -- no major figures in literature (the best is James Gould Cozzens), painting (except, perhaps, Andrew Wyeth), or poetry -- to counterpose to the adversary culture. In this sense, bourgeois culture has been shattered. (10)

If all this is true, it would follow that increasingly higher education will come to stand for the humiliation of traditional America. It would then seem to follow that there will be some faltering in our apparent progress toward universal higher education. I expect there will be. But I would argue that it need be no more than that if we will be a bit more rigorous and also perhaps a bit more honest about the situation we are in, and try to respond accordingly.

This was the intent, and hopefully also the outcome of the President's Message to the Congress on Higher Education, sent in March 1970.

The issue of universal higher education is a matter -- I believe our data are now firm on this point -- of primary concern to two groups: young persons from poor families, and those whose natural endowment is not such as would likely benefit from traditional forms of higher education. The President's message began by addressing itself to both these groups. His statement was unequivocal.

No qualified student who wants to go to college should be barred by lack of money. That has long been a great American goal; I propose that we achieve it now.

Something is basically unequal about opportunity for higher education when a young person whose family earns more than $15,000 a year is nine times more likely to attend college than a young persons whose family earns less than $3,000.

Something is basically wrong with Federal policy toward higher education when it has failed to correct this inequity, and when Government programs spending $5.3 billion yearly have largely been disjointed, ill-directed and without a coherent long-range plan.

Something is wrong with our higher education policy when -- on the threshold of a decade in which enrollments will increase almost 50% -- not nearly enough attention is focused on the 2-year community colleges so important to the careers of so many young people.

The President went on to propose the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 1970, a series of measures which would greatly expand loan funds available to students in higher education, but with the unprecedented provision that the over-all Federal program would be administered so that there would be, in effect, no such thing as a student from a poor family. That is to say, Federal subsidies would be used in such a way that the resources available to poor students are brought up to the level of middle income students. Another way of stating this is that the economic disadvantage of the bottom half of the income distribution

is eliminated. (To the degree that a Federal subsidy program can do this.) There is, in effect, no bottom half.

At the same time, students from the upper half of the income distribution would be assured the availability of loan funds, not so heavily subsidized as in the past, but still carrying the important discount associated with a Federal guarantee. The President stated:

> With the passage of this legislation, every low-income student entering an accredited college would be eligible for a combination of Federal grants and subsidized loans sufficient to give him the same ability to pay as a student from a family earning $10,000.
>
> With the passage of this legislation, every qualified student would be able to augment his own resources with Federally guaranteed loans, but Federal subsidies would be directed to students who need them most.

I believe it is fair to say that this is a proposal without precedent in American history. It would establish the conditions of universal higher education, and leave the outcome to the free choice of the young persons involved.

(It is important to be firm on this point. Not everyone will want to continue their education beyond high school or even through high school. I would be most dubious of a society that did any more than to point out the likely advantages, make it possible to continue, and leave it to the individual to decide.)

Passage of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 1970 would in effect establish the national goal of universal higher education. It is time we did just that.

The President simultaneously proposed a Career Education Program, funded at $100 million in fiscal 1972 "to assist States and institutions in meeting the additional costs of starting new programs to teach critically-needed skills in community colleges and technical institutes." This would seem to be an indispensable adjunct to any large expansion of the numbers of persons receiving post-secondary education.

What then impedes the passage of this historic legislation? For surely, nothing whatever has happened in the Congress, and more importantly, the proposal has been greeted with near silence on the campuses. The Scranton Commission was specific and enthusiastic in its endorsement of the legislation. Clark Kerr, who heads the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education has spoken warmly of the President's message, and has noted with justice how closely his proposals parallel some of the Commission's. But on balance the response would have to be described as indifference in the Congress and embarrassed silence or even suspicion in the world of higher education.

There are some who have said the university elite has been silent about this bill because it likes to talk about equal opportunity, but wants nothing to do with it. For my part I reject any such notion. The record of higher education in America is manifestly otherwise, in the sense of what it has done with the resources available to it.

I suggest another reason, namely that the universities are so preoccupied with internal problems -- the difficulty of managing what now exists -- that they cannot for the moment give much thought to the larger problem of expansion.

The essential issue of higher education at this moment -- the issue, that is, which is central to those responsible for it -- is not that of expansion, but rather of maintaining what now exists. There is hardly a major educational institution in the nation -- and this is likely soon to be true of many of our smaller and more specialized institutions -- that does not now face a crisis of governance and a crisis of finance.

The latter is a situation in which the Federal government is inevitably involved. It would seem to me that the task of statesmanship in the decade ahead will be to ensure that involvement with the financing of higher education does not lead to involvement with governance.

This will not be easy. The Federal government provides almost a quarter of the funds that go to support higher education, and a far greater proportion of the monies available for research. This is a situation with considerable historical precedent. Washington raised the subject in his Inaugural Address. But only in the past three decades has Federal involvement risen to critical levels. The problem is that as with so many Federal initiatives, we have seen a vast proliferation of programs without the formulation of any coherent policy.

The Administration has sought to redress this imbalance. We have sought to put policy first, and to require program to follow therefrom.

Hence the President first spoke on this subject in March 1969, barely nine weeks in office. In the context of the turbulence and alarm and recrimination that has so much characterized higher education in all its governmental relations in recent years, it is useful to recall that statement. The President began with the assertion that the crisis, of which I have been talking, was clearly upon us. The essence of the crisis was the preservation of intellectual freedom and the avoidance of politicization.

> Freedom -- intellectual freedom -- is in danger in America. The nature and content of that danger is as clear as any one thing could be. Violence -- physical violence, physical intimidation -- is seemingly on its way to becoming an accepted, or at all events a normal and not to be avoided element in the clash of opinion within university confines. Increasingly it is clear that this violence is directed to a clearly perceived and altogether too conceivable objective: not only to politicize the student bodies of our educational institutions, but to politicize the institutions as well. Anyone with the least understanding of the history of freedom will know that this has invariably meant not only political disaster to those nations that have submitted to such forces of obfuscation and repression, but cultural calamity as well. It is not too strong a statement to declare that this is the way civilizations begin to die.
>
> The process is altogether too familiar to those who would survey the wreckage of history. Assault and counter assault, one extreme leading to the opposite extreme; the voices of reason and calm discredited. As Yeats foresaw: "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold. . ." None of us has the right to suppose it cannot happen here.

Thereupon the President asserted the fundamental point of Federal policy, namely that intellectual freedom within the colleges and universities of the land was something that could only be preserved by internal efforts, that it could not be imposed by external force.

> The first thing to do at such moments is to reassert first principles. The federal government cannot, should not -- must not -- enforce such principles. That is fundamentally the task and the responsibility of the university community. But any may state what these principles are, for they are as widely understood as they are cherished.

First, that universities and colleges are places of excellence in which men are judged by achievement and merit in defined areas. The independence and competence of the faculty, the commitment, and equally the competence of the student body, are matters not to be compromised. The singular fact of American society -- the fact which very likely distinguishes us most markedly from any other nation on earth, is that in the untroubled pursuit of an application of this principle we have created the largest, most democratic, most open system of higher learning in history. None need fear the continued application of those principles; but all must dread their erosion. The second principle -- and I would argue, the only other -- is that violence or the threat of violence may never be permitted to influence the actions or judgments of the university community. Once it does the community, almost by definition, ceases to be a university.

This has continued to be the policy of the Administration, despite, as I say, the alarm and recrimination that have from time to time appeared on all sides.

This was done early. What followed was a prolonged, and as would be expected, complex effort to translate policy into program. Here the Administration emerged with a fundamental conclusion: Increasingly it appears to us that reliance on categorical aid programs as the principal source of federal support for higher education, is fundamentally subversive of the principle of non-interference. A categorical aid program is by definition a form of Federal interference in the internal affairs and priorities of the university community.

A measure of history is required here, of which the first element is the growth of higher education associated with the growth of categorical aid programs.

Between 1945 and 1970, the number of enrolled students more than quadrupled. The ratio of college and university students to the total population of the country nearly tripled, such that 3.3% of all Americans were enrolled for degree credit in post-secondary institutions. The total annual cost multiplied twenty-fold; the amount of the Federal share went from one-sixth to almost one fourth of the total budget. This over a period when the nation's population rose less than 50% (from 140 million to 200 million), when the Gross National Product rose less than five-fold, and when the total budget of the Federal government only doubled. Higher education has been one of the fastest growing sectors of our national life. In 1945, it accounted for approximately one-half of one percent of the GNP; by last year, it had more than quintupled, rising to 2.6% of the Gross National Product.

Let us for a moment turn to the nature of the Federal government's role in higher education, as it has evolved since the Morrill Act. I should like to borrow heavily from an excellent summary prepared for

the Carnegie Commission by Ronald A. Wolk. Until the Second World War, Federal aid to higher education was all but non-existent. In school year 1939-40, Federal sources provided about 5 percent of the total income of institutions of higher education. As I have mentioned, by 1945 that share had grown to 16 percent. This extraordinary rise, from an almost-inconsequential share to a very important one over 5 years time, reflects the mammoth war-time research and development effort, in which universities shared so nobly and so dramatically; and, of course, the G. I. bill, which in Wolk's words, "paved the way for the most dramatic enrollment explosion in the history of higher education." (11)

Aside from the large numbers of students whose way was now, for the first time, paid by the Federal government, the principal beneficiary of government spending in universities during the War was large-scale academic science. Although scientific research received its first Federal boost from the Morrill Act itself, I think every student of the history of American higher education would agree that the principal effect was on agricultural research and that, although this helped ensure the beginning of science and scientific research as we have come to understand them, they were relatively minor operations until the Second World War. The enormous expansion of chemistry, physics, biology, engineering and their

derivative fields came from the Federal government; but it is absolutely essential to remember that this expansion reflected the fact that the Federal government wanted it to happen. The universities were put to work on behalf of goals and activities deemed by government officials to be in the national interest.

In his message of last March the President was about as open on this point as I would think a Chief Executive ought to be.

> For three decades now the Federal Government has been hiring universities to do work it wanted done. In far the greatest measure, this work has been in the national interest, and the Nation is in the debt of those universities that have so brilliantly performed it. But the time has come for the Federal Government to help academic communities to pursue excellence and reform in fields of their own choosing as well, and by means of their own choice.

The extent to which it has been the Federal Government that has done the choosing of late simply cannot be overestimated. Wolk reminds us that "Some $15 million in federal funds went to higher education for research in 1940 -- almost exclusively for agricultural research. In 1944 alone, a single agency (the Office of Scientific Research and Development) spent $90 million on contracts with the Universities."

Despite the post-war cutbacks, the Federal investment in university-sponsored research and development continued to grow.

And after the launching of Sputnik it grew very quickly indeed. "In 1955-56, the Federal government spent about $355 million on academic research and development; a decade later, the amount reached $1.3 billion." I emphasize scientific research because it is probably the biggest example of the effect of Federal support on higher education: mammoth and rapid expansion, so big and so fast as to be quite exhilerating for all concerned; but accompanied by a clear case of Federal domination of the directions in which higher education moved. The Government was still hiring the universities to do its bidding. In retrospect, this is perfectly clear. At the time, the huge amounts and rapid expansion made it look to many academics as though the Federal government was underwriting them to do as they liked. But that was an illusion; the clear fact was that the Congress and the Executive deemed the expansion and improvement of American science to be in the national interest; and that is what they hired universities to do, no matter how lax the rules may have seemed at the time.

Much the same may be said of student aid. It has come in three waves, all within the last quarter-century. First was the G.I. bill, demonstrating the nation's gratitude to its Veterans and its

commitment to educate and employ them after the War that they won. In the Fifties was the National Defense Education Act, which gave money to people to go to college because the Government felt an acute need to upgrade American education, especially school teaching; hence the teacher forgiveness provisions of NDEA. And in the Sixties, of course, has come a wide assortment of programs that provide Federal aid for disadvantaged students to attend college, again because the Government, reflecting a national concern, decided that this was an important national purpose.

At no point in this process would I judge that the higher education community had control over its own destiny, at least insofar as its destiny was shaped by Federal funds. I think we in the academic community tended to absorb and assimilate each new Federal intrusion, concluding after-the-fact that we must have wanted it, and not bridling at requests that might have seemed outrageous were they not accompanied by large sums of the taxpayer's money. There are exceptions, of course, such as Harvard's refusal to undertake classified research; but only the wealthy could afford to preserve their virtue in the light of generous and repeated propositions.

Categorical aid is just about all there has been. As Wolk says, "Virtually all of the $4.6 billion in federal aid to higher education in 1967 could be described as categorical aid, in the sense that the federal government has categorized or designated its funds to be spent in certain areas which it has deemed to be of national concern."

I would suggest to you that back in the days when Federal aid comprised 5 percent or less of university budgets, the fact that such aid came through categorical programs had, at most, a marginal effect on higher education. But in an era when the Federal share approaches a full one-quarter of the budget, the effect is very powerful indeed. And the effect is primarily one of distortion of institutional purposes in pursuit of Federally-determined objectives.

That is why one is bemused when members of the academic community get upset over reductions in any one of the many categories of Federal aid. Such reductions -- which are more than matched by increases elsewhere, total Federal outlays for higher education having risen every single year since 1960 -- simply reflect changed national interests, changed priorities if you will. When the higher education community allowed itself to get into the business of accepting categorical grant money from the Federal government, it accepted an

implicit condition, which was that no category was permanent or immutable. When a private institution allows itself to become dependent on support that is itself subject to the political process, it entangles itself in a sequence that it is largely powerless to control. And it certainly runs the risk of being victimized by the political forces that govern the money; but one would have to be paranoid indeed to think that the Federal government's changes in emphasis in recent years amounted to victimization. Let me repeat the point that total Federal outlays for higher education have grown in every one of the last ten years, and have grown dramatically, from $1.1 billion in 1960 to about $5 billion in 1970, thus sustaining a rising curve that has had few dips and no severe or lasting ones since the Second World War.

What has happened, of course, is that the categorical emphasis have shifted; and, to be sure, the over-all rate of growth has slowed in the higher education segment of the Federal budget, as it has for the total budget and almost every other individual portion of it. As you probably know, during the decade of the 1960's education was the fastest growing portion of the Federal budget; many would argue that it was only catching up to where it should be, was only receiving

its due. I do not disagree. But it would be naive in the extreme to think that this "catch-up growth rate" would continue forever, particularly as the rate of growth in college enrollments has itself slowed; degree-credit enrollment in post-secondary institutions more than doubled from 1957 to 1967; although the projected increase in absolute numbers of students over the next decade, from 1967 to 1977, is about the same, the growth rate will be 50% rather than 100%.

In a political system, one man's raised priority is another man's reduced budget; one categorical program increased usually means another one diminished. It is perfectly understandable why anyone whose favorite program is cut is irritated, if not desolate. But that is the built-in risk of organizing institutions around categorical Federal support.

Not to know this is not to know how government operates. If many on the academic side of the exchange did not know much about government, the reverse ignorance has been just as much in evidence.

Higher education has been deemed important to the Government only to the extent that it has accomplished particular purposes that the Government deemed important, and could accomplish them more effectively, faster, or cheaper, than someone else. This sounds harsh,

for we academics spend a good deal of time reassuring ourselves that universities and especially professors are vitally important to the future of the nation. But there is a crucial distinction to be made: something that is considered important to the nation by its proponents and beneficiaries becomes important to the Government only insofar as those proponents and beneficiaries can convince the nation as a whole that it is important. And that it is worth the money, more so, at least, than competing claimants for the same funds. Even then, it does not become important in its own right, or in the terms that its proponents view it; it becomes important to the Government only in those terms that the nation has started to perceive as important. The result: another categorical program.

The three great bursts of Federal funds and categorical programs follow this pattern. During the Second World War, the nation perceived that higher education was important insofar as it could do the research and development necessary to win a modern war, and insofar as it could make veterans employable. Sputnik roused the nation to concern over the state of teaching in its schools, particularly in science, and over the state of elementary and secondary education in general. The newly-awakened concern with poverty and opportunity in the early 1960's bred a sense

that higher education could somehow ease the plight of the poor, the non-white and the deprived. And in each case, the Federal categorical programs that resulted were concentrated on these purposes, not on others. And each time the higher education community not only accepted the money and adopted the purposes, but also came to view the programs and funds as its birthright, as something to which it was somehow entitled, rather than as a necessarily-temporary response to a perceived condition.

The Administration's response to this long continued situation, which had so clearly become unviable, was to propose a fundamental shift in the form of Federal assistance to educational institutions, away from categorical aid towards general purpose grants. A National Foundation for Higher Education was proposed, to be administered by a semi-autonomous Board and Director appointed by the President. It would make grants to individual institutions, to States and communities, and to public and private agencies. The object was not simply to reverse the forms of Federal assistance, but in the measure possible to redress the imbalances that the earlier forms have wrought.

The President's message was explicit on this point.

One of the unique achievements of American higher education in the past century has been the standard of excellence that its leading institutions have set. The most serious threat posed by the present fiscal plight of higher education is the possible loss of that excellence.

But the crisis in higher education at this time is more than simply one of finances. It has to do with the uses to which the resources of higher education are put, as well as to the amount of those resources, and it is past time the Federal Government acknowledged its own responsibility for bringing about, through the forms of support it has given and the conditions of that support, a serious distortion of the activities of our centers of academic excellence.

The purposes he avowed are ones I would hope most of us might share. His concern was in no sense limited to the large or prestigious institutions. He referred also to "the community college mounting an outstanding program of technical education, the predominantly black college educating future leaders, the university turning toward new programs in ecology or oceanography, education or public administration."

To this end he proposed that the National Foundation have three principal purposes.

-- To provide a source of funds for the support of excellence, new ideas and reform in higher education, which could be given out on the basis of the quality of the institutions and programs concerned.

-- To strengthen colleges and universities or courses of instruction that play a uniquely valuable role in American higher education or that are faced with special difficulties.

-- To provide an organization concerned, on the highest level, with the development of national policy in higher education.

$200 million was budgeted for the Foundation's first year.

One would like to report that the response of higher education was positive with respect at least to this proposal, but I fear this was not the case either. Here and there approval was expressed. Here and there suspicion. But on balance there was no response. Quite serious efforts by the President, members of the Cabinet, and of the White House staff to explain the proposal and to elicit either support or some counter-proposal came to nothing. Time after time such discussion would begin on a fairly high -- and appropriate -- level of general principles and within moments degenerate into a competitive and barely dignified clamor over this little categorical program or that.

Had we thought categorical aid had distorted the relations of the higher education community to the Federal government before

the program was announced, we were utterly convinced of the fact in the aftermath. Corrupted would not be too strong a term. No one seemed able to think of the whole subject. Few, even, seemed able to think of the interests of a single whole institution. A major Presidential initiative which, right or wrong, was at very least the product of some thought and some analysis was greeted by silence on the part of precisely those institutions that are presumably devoted to thought and analysis.

Had there existed a powerful "higher education lobby" which willy nilly would push through great increases in existing programs, the sequence of events might be more explicable. (It is worth noting that in the course of five years the elementary and secondary school interests have created such a lobby in Washington.) But there was no such lobby, and the result was predictable. Congress did nothing. The current newsletter of the American Council on Education reports that the chairman of the Subcommittee on Education had given up efforts to assemble a committee quorum to draft a comprehensive higher education bill. "She said," the report continues, "she saw no chance of passing a higher education bill at this time because of concern over campus unrest."

And there we are left. I have hoped, earlier, to make clear a conviction that campus unrest is not going to go away. It is and will remain a condition of American society in the present era. (One would very much hope that campus violence will ebb, and that is surely a possibility. But the gulf between the campuses, especially the elite ones, and the rest of the society will persist.) The task of statesmanship would accordingly seem to be to fashion a system of Federal (and of course state and local) support for higher education which is as much as possible insulated from the political tempers of the time.

The campuses are almost surely going to continue to make quite extraordinary demands on the society at large. I repeat that this was predictable, and was predicted. The culture in this respect is extremely volatile, even in ways unstable. This is the result not of failure, but of success; not of the suppression of liberty, but of its extension. One recalls Bernard Shaw's prophecy: "Later on, liberty will not be . . . enough: men will die for human perfection, to which they will sacrifice all their liberty gladly." This is a condition we shall live with: threatening to the traditions of university and society alike. More then is the reason to address ourselves with something very like a sense of urgency to the question of how we are to preserve and expand higher education whilst maintaining a diverse society that will on occasion appear almost a dichotomous one.

Similarly, the society will continue to make enormous demands on higher education. The circumstances that led to the categorical aid system of Federal support have not much changed. Indeed the demands for relevancy in higher education, and the presumption that university professors can do what Mayors, Governors, and even Presidents cannot is very much to be encountered at this time. Oscar and Mary Handlin have made unmistakably clear that this was the

primordial expectation of American higher education. Higher education was to be "immediately useful and practical" if it was to receive public support.(12) Useful in training ministers; useful in training farmers; useful in training technicians; useful in training social engineers. Indeed at times one wonders that education as such survived. All this will continue, albeit one would predict a certain withdrawal of the campuses in the period just ahead. (It was interesting to note the proposal of the Scranton Commission that "In general, we recommend an overall reduction in outside service commitments.") Here again the task of statesmanship will be to devise ways by which the services to institutions, private or public, off the campus, can be carried out in ways that maintain both the independence of the institution and its viability as a stable and creative society.

No small efforts these. Gigantic ones if they are to be combined with steady progress toward a national goal of universal higher education. New kinds of institutions will need to be invented. New forms of institutional governance, new types of teaching and new subjects to be taught. But to achieve this in, let us say, the next thirty years, would hardly involve a greater achievement, or greater change, than that of the past three decades.

There is only one respect in which the period ahead involves demands on higher education that are in ways novel. The demand is for national leadership. If there is to be fundamental reform in the relations between the national government and higher education there will have to be leadership on both sides, there will have to be negotiations, agreements, oversight, revision. The higher education community is not now organized for any such effort. It has no such men. It seemingly comprehends no such undertakings.

This is the leap of imagination that is required. To become not just a national resource and a national problem, but a national force as well. It is an effort contrary to many of the best instincts of precisely those men now in higher education that one would wish to see take up the challenge. But that is what a challenge involves. Much will depend on the outcome.

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